

WILDERNESS LAKES TRAILS



April 2009

Dear Friends,

In September 2008, we sent a letter introducing Wilderness Lakes Trails, Inc. (WLT), a non-profit organization created for the purpose of expanding the existing 8-mile bike trail that begins in Land O' Lakes. The proposed trail expansion will ultimately become a 40-mile loop. Traversing the Wisconsin-Michigan border twice through Watersmeet Township, the trail will travel around the Sylvania Wilderness area. Another 21 miles, designated as a shared-use bike route, will link to the Vilas County trail network and a portion of the Western Upper Peninsula trail system. Visit our web site at www.wildlakes.org to see a detailed map and additional information.

The estimated cost of the entire project is over \$2,500,000. Of this amount, \$625,000 is needed from private donations. Significant progress toward our goal was made over the past year. The following is a brief outline of our accomplishments to date:

\$545,000 in grants has been secured for the Wisconsin end of the Wilderness Lakes Trail. Engineering should start soon after the contracts are signed in April, and the construction of this trail is scheduled for completion in 2010.

All of the required approvals for the signage on the shared-use route using existing roads from Highway B to Eagle River have been obtained. Our plan is to have the signs in place this summer.

The entire 10-mile section of the Agonikak Trail on the Michigan side has been brushed and signed and is now a very usable hiking and mountain biking trail. The trail will be gradually improved as funding becomes available.

A grant application has been submitted to the Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources for a portion of the Agonikak. We have also secured a grant in the amount of \$10,000 from the Dalmac Fund for use on the Michigan side of the trail.

(over)

WLT has reached an agreement with Gogebic County and the Town of Watersmeet to place shared-use signs on Old US 2 and Thousand Island Lake Road from Watersmeet to the Michigan-Wisconsin border. The signs have been purchased and are scheduled to be installed by the County road crew this spring. This means we will have 60-plus miles of biking routes in place in 2009, circumnavigating the Sylvania Wilderness and connecting Watersmeet with Land O' Lakes and Eagle River.

In 2009, \$47,299 (plus a letter of commitment for \$15,000) was raised, half of which is committed to matching funds for grants at this time. Looking forward to 2010, we hope to be in a position to apply for a \$500,000+ grant for the North section of the Agonikak. This will require upwards of \$100,000 in matching funds. (continued on back) We sincerely appreciate all the many hours of volunteer work and the monetary donations that we have received, but there is much more work to be done. **We continue to need your help!** And remember, all monetary donations are tax deductible under our 501(c)(3) status. WLT membership information is enclosed. Please consider joining us in making the Wilderness Lakes Trail system a reality in our beautiful north woods for all to enjoy now and for generations to come.

We will be happy to discuss contributions or sponsorship opportunities by email at info@wildlakes.org or call 906-544-2448 to speak with a trail representative. Thank you for considering this worthwhile project.

Best regards,



James N. Thomas
President

MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM

Name/s: _____

Street Address or P.O. Box

City, State, Zip

Telephone

E-mail Address

Individual/Family

Organization/Business

\$100	Member	\$500
\$250	Trail Blazer	\$750
\$500	Pioneer	\$1,000
\$1000	Explorer	\$2,500
\$1,500	Visionary	\$5,000
	Other	

Please mail your tax-deductible contribution to:

**Wilderness Lakes Trails
PO Box 363
Watersmeet, MI 49969**

Thank you for your support !